Discussions on Iran-India Gas pipeline project

95. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he discussed the long pending India-Iran gas pipeline project with the Prime Minister of Pakistan during his recent visit; and

(b) if so, what is the result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During the visit to India by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shri Shaukat Aziz on November 24-25, 2004, the importance of availability and access to the energy resources in the region around South Asia was recognized and the issue of import of natural gas from Iran to India on-land via Pakistan was discussed. While the Minister's discussion with the Prime Minister of Pakistan was limited to a review of the general hydrocarbons situation in each country, and the issues of bilateral cooperation were touched upon. It is now proposed to hold bilateral discussion between the Petroleum Ministers of the two countries in pursuance of the agreement between the two Foreign Ministers in New Delhi on 6 September, 2004 and subsequent developments in this regard.

Deal for supply of gas from Myanmar

96. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have concluded a deal with Myanmar for supply of gas to India;

(b) whether a pipeline is needed to bring this gas to India;

(c) whether Bangladesh has given transit rights for this pipeline;

(d) if so, the details of the entire deal including cost of pipelines, and other fiscal benefits to Bangladesh;

(e) whether this deal is worth in the long run to India; and

(f) if so, the gains from this pipeline?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Recently, a delegation visited Myanmar to participate in a trilateral summit of oil Ministers of Myanmar, Bangladesh and India to discuss cooperation in hydrocarbon sector with Myanmar and the import of natural gas from Myanmar through an onland pipeline via

Bangladesh. A Joint Press statement was also issued by the three Ministers on 13.1.2005 in which Government of Bangladesh has 'in principle' agreed to allow laying of natural gas pipeline fromMyanmar to India through Bangladesh territory. The three Ministers also agreed to constitute a Techno-Commercial Working Committee (TCWC) to prepare an MoU for cooperation for implementation of Myanmar-Bangladesh-India Pipeline Project which will finally be signed by the three Governments. The draft MoU was negotiated and initialed in the first meeting of the Techno-Commercial Working Group in Yangon on 24-25 February, 2005. Formalities are now being completed for three Ministers to jointly sign the MoU at Dhaka shortly.

(b) While the possibility of importing gas from Myanmar by the sea-route of LNG or CNG is not foreclosed, subject to the findings of the detailed project report and the pricing of gas at the well-head in Myanmar, it would appear *prima facie* that the pipeline route is a desirable option to ensure our energy security in East and North-East India.

(c) The draft MoU provides for transit through Bangladesh for gas from Myanmar to India and the right of India and Bangladesh to inject into, and siphon off, their own gas using the same pipeline.

(d) these details will be worked out by the Project authorities and submitted for approval to the three Governments concerned.

(e) and (f) Natural gas from Myanmar will immensely benefit the gas starved Eastern States of the country and would attract significant investment for the industrial development of these States.

Profits of Oil Companies

†97. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the consumer sales prices of petrol and diesel were, last time, fixed in November 4, 2004 in the country.

(b) if not, on what date they were fixed;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the average profits of the oil companies have increased in the country after the above period; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.